

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending. Claims 1, 13, 18, 22, 25, 27 and 32 are amended. Claims 13, 22, and 27 have been amended to more distinctly claim the invention to include the recitation that, "one of said first diameter and said second diameter is larger than the other of said first diameter and said second diameter." Claims 1-33 were rejected in the January 12, 2005 Office Action. In view of the following, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

Claim 28 has been preliminarily rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 27, upon which claim 28 is dependent, has been amended to recite a sleeve portion, "wherein the sleeve portion has a second diameter different from the first diameter and one of said first diameter and said second diameter is larger than the other of said first diameter and said second diameter." Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 27, as amended, provides a proper antecedent basis for the term "the larger" in claim 28.

The Examiner has preliminarily rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lathrop (U.S. Patent No. 5,520,582). Applicant respectfully traverses and asserts that Lathrop does not disclose all elements recited in claim 1, as amended. For example, claim 1 recites, "a base [that] includes an integral coupling portion ... and a sleeve with an integral coupling portion ... , wherein said sleeve coupling portion is matingly engaged to said base coupling portion." In contrast, Lathrop discloses a sleeve 30,32,34,36 with an axially threaded bore 44, a plug 12 with an axially threaded bore 22 and a separate bolt 70 which extends through both the sleeve end and the plug. Bore 22 and bore 44 are not matingly engaged. As such, claim 1 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Lathrop. Claims 2-17 are dependent upon claim 1 and allowable for at least this reason.

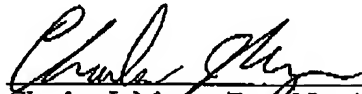
Claim 18 has been preliminarily rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lathrop. Applicant respectfully traverses and asserts that Lathrop does not disclose all elements recited in claim 18, as amended. For example, claim 18 recites "a base [that] includes an integral coupling portion; and a sleeve with an integral coupling portion, ... wherein said sleeve coupling portion is matingly engaged to said base coupling portion." In contrast, Lathrop describes a plug 12 with an axially threaded bore 22 and a sleeve 30,32,34,36 with an axially threaded bore 44 and a separate bolt 70 which extends through both the sleeve end and the plug. Bore 22 is not matingly engaged to bore 44. As such, claim 18, as amended, is allowable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Lathrop. Claims 19-24 are dependent upon claim 18 and are allowable for at least this reason.

The Examiner has preliminarily rejected claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lathrop. Applicant respectfully traverses and asserts that Lathrop does not disclose all elements as recited in claim 25, as amended. For example, claim 25 recites the steps of "attaching a base portion inside the [bowling ball] hole, wherein the base portion has an integral coupling portion; [and] engaging a sleeve portion within the hole to the base portion, wherein the sleeve portion has ... an integral coupling portion, and said engaging is accomplished by the base coupling portion meshing with the sleeve coupling portion." In contrast, Lathrop discloses a plug 12 with an axially threaded bore 22, and a sleeve 30,32,34,36 with an axially threaded bore 44 and a separate bolt 70 which extends through both the sleeve end and the plug. Bore 22 does not mesh with bore 44. As such, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 25 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Lathrop. Claims 26-31 are dependent on claim 25 and allowable for at least this reason.

Claim 32 has been preliminarily rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lathrop. Applicant respectfully traverses and asserts that Lathrop does not disclose all elements recited in claim 32, as amended. For example, claim 32 recites "a base [that] includes an integral threaded portion [and] a sleeve with an integral threaded portion, ... wherein said sleeve threaded portion is rotatably engaged to said base threaded portion." In contrast, Lathrop discloses a plug 12 with an axially threaded bore 22 and a sleeve 30,32,34,36 with an axially threaded bore 44 and a separate bolt 70 which extends through both the sleeve end and the plug. Bore 22 is not rotatably engaged to bore 44. As such, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 32 is patentable in view of Lathrop. Claim 33 is dependent upon claim 32 and allowable for at least this reason.

In summary, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1-33, as currently presented, are allowable and requests the Examiner to move this case toward that end. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned directly if it would be helpful to the advancement of this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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